Abbreviations:

STPS	: Super Thermal Power Station
SEBs	: State Electricity Boards
EB	: Electricity Board
GRIDCO	: Grid Corporation of Orissa Limited
WR	: Western Region
SR	: Southern Region

Private participation in Coal Sector

261. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is increasing demand for fuel (coal) to generate electricity in the country;

(b) the steps Government propose to take to extend power sector at much faster rate to meet the increasing demand of electricity;

(c) whether there is any proposal to open coal sector for private sector participation; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There is an increasing demand for fuel (coal) to generate electricity in the country. The steps being taken/to be taken by the Government to expend power sector are (i) addition in new capacity through setting up of new power stations; (ii) adoption of energy conservation measures; and (iii) renovation and modernisation of old thermal and hydro power stations for improved electricity generation.

(c) and (d) Under the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973, coal mining was exclusively reserved for the public sector. By an amendment to the act in 1976, Government has inter-alia, allowed sub-lease for coal mining to private parties in isolated small pockets for captive mining not amenable to economic development and not requiring rail transport. In order to augment thermal power generation and to create additional thermal power capacity during the VIII Plan Period, Government allowed private participation in the power sector. The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 amended with effect from June, 1993 allowed coal mining for captive consumption for generation of power, washing of coal and other end uses to be notified by the Government from time to time. The June, 1993 amendment applies to both the public sector as well as private sector companies desiring to mine coal for captive consumption. The restriction of captive mining does not apply to the State-owned coal and mineral development undertakings like CIL, SCCL, Neyveli Lignite Corporation and Mineral Development Corporations of the State Governments. The Government has also allowed non-captive coal mining in February, 1997.

Concession to Foreign Investors in Power Sector

262. DR. MOHAN DABU: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any assessment of investment needs in the power sector during the next 10 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have failed to mobilise adequate foreign investment in the Power sector during the last three years; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and whether Government is considering to extend further concession to foreign investors in Power sector?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) The